

Secretary of State

By Meg Leonard

The Department of State is part of our country's government. It is part of the executive branch. The head of this department is called the Secretary of State. This person is chosen by the president. The Senate has to agree with the president's decision. If this happens, then the person can take office. The Department of State was created by Congress in 1789. It is the senior executive department in the United States government.

The Department of State has many responsibilities. The Secretary of State has a big job. The Secretary of State is part of the president's cabinet. The Cabinet gives the president advice on issues that deal with their specific departments. The Secretary of State is the president's chief adviser on foreign affairs. This means that he or she gives the president advice on dealing with other countries. If there is a situation with a foreign country, the Department of State is involved. The Secretary of State negotiates with other countries. Negotiating is when both sides talk out a solution to a problem. They come to an agreement. The Secretary of State advises the president when ambassadors to foreign countries are chosen. An ambassador is a person who represents his or her country. This department makes sure Americans and their properties are safe in other countries. It tells American citizens what life is like for people in other countries around the world.



The Department of State has responsibilities within our country, too. It issues passports to American citizens. It has custody of the Great Seal of the United States. It prepares certain presidential proclamations. It publishes treaties and international acts. It holds the official record of foreign relations of the United States. It also directs communication between the federal government and each of the fifty states. The Secretary of State makes decisions that affect all Americans.

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Questions

- _____ 1. What branch of government includes the Department of State?
- A. Legislative
 - B. Executive
 - C. Judicial
 - D. none of the above
- _____ 2. Which of the following titles is given to the head of the Department of State?
- A. Head of State
 - B. Secretary of State
 - C. President of State
 - D. Leader of the State
- _____ 3. Which of the following does the Department of State deal with?
- A. issues with foreign countries
 - B. environmental issues
 - C. issues between the states
 - D. taxes

Name _____



Date _____

_____ 4. Which of the following documents is given out by the Department of State?

- A. Social Security card
- B. government ID card
- C. driver's license
- D. passport

5. List at least two duties of the Department of State.

Would you like to work for the Department of State? Why or why not?

Write a story about two groups who have to negotiate. Describe the issue. Tell how they solve their problem.
